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ABSTRACT

This pamphlet reviews 11 recent documents and journal articles from the ERIC database that focus on the topic of school-business partnerships: (1) "Schools Are Bullish on Business" by Mary Harbaugh (EJ319210); (2) "Salem Program Demonstrates Five Keys to a Successful Business-School Partnership" by Mary C. Jensen (ED261459); (3) "School-Business Partnerships: Working To Defuse the Dropout Time Bomb" by Manuel J. Justiz and Marilyn C. Kameen (NASSP Bulletin); (4) "Business and the Public Schools" by Marsha Levine (EJ334205); (5) "Building School-Business Coalitions that Pay Long-Range Dividends" by Dale Mann (EJ337482); (6) "Partnerships: Schools and Businesses Collaborate for a Healthy Economy--Ideas for Action in Education and Work" by the Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory (ED264437); (7) "How To Start a School/Business Partnership" by Carol O'Connell (ED261198); (8) "Partnerships in Education: A Handbook" by the Pennsylvania Department of Education and others (ED253620); (9) "School-Business Partnerships: Laying the Foundation for Successful Programs" by Santee C. Ruffin, Jr. (EJ294894); (10) "Collaborative Efforts of Business and the New York City Public High Schools" by Donna M. Tapper (ED271526); and (11) "School-Business Partnerships--A Shortcut to Effectiveness" by George E. Wynne. (TE)

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THE BEST OF ON EDUCATIONAL MANAGEMENT

AASA Edition Number 89, April 1987

The Best of ERIC presents annotations of ERIC literature on important topics in educational management.

The selections are intended to give educators easy access to the most significant and useful information available from ERIC. Because of space limitations, the items listed should be viewed as representative, rather than exhaustive, of literature meeting those criteria.

Materials were selected for inclusion from the ERIC catalogs *Resources in Education (RIE)* and *Current Index to Journals in Education (CIJE)*.

ERIC® Clearinghouse on Educational Management
College of Education, University of Oregon

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School-Business Partnerships

1 **Harbaugh, Mary.** "Schools Are Bullish on Business." *Instructor*, 94, 9 (May 1985), pp. 24-27. EJ 319 210.

The marriage of schools and business interests is not a new idea, but today it is taking a clearer, more specific form. Business people and educators are finding that despite prior misconceptions about each other's domain, they often have compatible goals—goals that can be achieved through a close, cooperative relationship.

"Tangible rewards for both school and business partners," says Harbaugh, associate editor of *Instructor*, "vary from modest to amazing, from kids' boosters in the corporate lobby to thousands of dollars of Apple computers for the fourth grade." Yet teachers and business people are only now beginning to fully explore this mutually beneficial concept. People from the community are going into schools to see what teachers are doing, what young talent is available. Meanwhile, teachers are shedding their academic cloaks and turning to local and even national businesses for classroom resources and support for their ideas.

There are a number of successful partnership models. The most popular is the classic "adopt-a-school/adopt-a-business" one with an estimated 50,000 participants nationwide. Models on the leading edge include a Burbank, California, program that pools corporate resources with school personnel to offer top caliber child care for working parents.

For educators who feel they are ready to try it, Harbaugh offers concrete suggestions on "how to make the right connections." One idea is to host breakfast meetings with potential partners, sounding out each other for ways of profitable connection. "Remember that you're making a common sense proposition," she concludes, "that people form partnerships for mutual benefits."

2 **Jensen, Mary C.** *Salem Program Demonstrates Five Keys to a Successful Business-School Partnership. OSSC Bulletin* Series. Eugene, OR: Oregon School Study Council, September 1985. 37 pages. ED 261 459.

In 1981, the Salem (Oregon) School District and the city's Chamber of Commerce began what is now a nationally recognized program of school-business partnerships. Despite ensuing economic difficulties, enthusiasm among participants was so high it carried the program through lean times. "Expansion and enrichment," says Jensen, "now symbolize the area's business-school program: forty-four partnerships currently link individual schools to businesses, nonprofit organizations, and state agencies."

Tracing the development of the Salem-Keizer Business Partnership in Education program, Jensen includes interview segments with school officials and business people. Initially, the spirit and commitment by educators to reciprocal partnerships and to thorough monitoring sparked similar reactions in business leaders who, in turn, volunteered for partnerships. At the root of the program's success are five key elements: (1) long- rather than short-term goals; (2) broad-based support involving key school administrators and business leaders; (3) mutually developed written policies; (4) frequent planning sessions; and (5) continuous, centralized communication and monitoring.

These elements served as a model for Oregon's Lincoln and Washington County school districts, which implemented similar programs in rural and "high tech" settings, respectively. Both districts are confident of positive outcomes as each program evolves.

The move away from the term *adopt-a-school* to the more acceptable *business-school partnership*, says Jensen, reflects the maturation of a process and a recognition of mutual goals. In education and business both partners have much to offer each other; the result can be a noticeable boost to the educational and economic well-being of a community.

3 **Justiz, Manuel J., and Kameen, Marilyn C.** "School-Business Partnerships: Working to Defuse the Dropout Time Bomb." *NASSP Bulletin*, 70, 494 (December 1986), pp. 103-08. EJ number not yet assigned.

The problem of school dropouts has so affected the quality of entry-level job applications that only with concerted effort by both education and business interests is there any hope of reversing this trend. Schools are the key to this change.

"As the only social institution into which all our youth are drawn for prolonged exposure, the school is unquestionably the chief battleground on which today's largely unchecked unemployment-poverty threat to human dignity and economic growth can be fought," say Justiz and Kameen. Although no one can be certain that school-business partnerships can defuse the "dropout time bomb," evidence suggests it will happen because our economy demands it.

More American businesses are making public education their business, as much for self-preservation as for any societal benefit. With an estimated 25 to 50 percent of current ninth-graders predicted to fail high school, future projections are not that there will

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be job shortages but a shortage of skilled workers. Corporations like Digital Equipment, Hewlett-Packard, Lockheed, and Atlantic-Richfield have embarked on ambitious school-business programs local, regional, and national in scope to address this dilemma.

For example, Atlantic-Richfield and about fifty other companies are working together with public schools in fourteen cities nationwide to offer alternative delivery of social services to urban youth. Coordinated by the Cities in Schools organization, this partnership brings needed community human services into school buildings for maximum accessibility.

Historically, the increased needs of productivity and foreign competition have forced industry to urge dramatic changes in the schools. Today, a similar thrust is necessary, say the authors, to stem the alarming flow of dropouts unprepared for the realities of an '80s economy—this time with stronger, more tangible involvement by the corporate sector.

4 **Levine, Marsha.** "Business and the Public Schools." Educational *Leadership*, 43, 5 (February 1986), pp. 47-48. EJ 334 205.

Business-school collaborations have much to offer both sectors, believes Levine; by focusing on their mutual interests, business leaders and educators can improve the overall quality of public schools. As coauthor of *Investing in Our Children*, a two-year study by the Committee for Economic Development, Levine observed business and education leaders searching for ways in which each could effectively collaborate toward raising the quality of education.

One such way is to apply proven business practices, such as cost/benefit analysis and empowering responsible personnel, to create changes at classroom and school building levels. "Businesses have come to understand," says Levine, "the importance of well-educated and trained people in their organizations, so they invest heavily—upwards of $40 billion—in human resources." Schools, by contrast, devote only a small portion of their overall budgets to inservices and other training. Research and development also lags dramatically and will require considerably increased budgets to achieve the payoffs industry has experienced.

While educators are justifiably concerned that business involvement is motivated by self-interest, these interests in fact reflect broader societal goals: well-educated citizens, concerns for the quality of life, and the quality of the current and future work force.

5 **Mann, Dale.** "Building School-Business Coalitions That Pay Long-Range Dividends." *NASSP Bulletin*, 70, 490 (May 1986), pp. 1-5. EJ 337 482.

Schools and businesses can no longer afford the "business as usual" approach and must now seek ways to improve. Mann believes that high schools particularly—led by innovative principals—can play a key role in this urgent challenge. "Principals have not yet been heard from," he says, "in the rush to form business/school partnerships, but who is in a better position to tap the private sector for added help?"

But even a committed principal will run into snags trying to get business support, especially if the school district is far from a big city. Almost all urban districts have some kind of partnership program, but "interest falls off as distance from big cities increases." Therefore, other, more localized approaches must be used.

Although an aggressive program of establishing business-school coalitions is generally a good idea, the school concerned must first get "its own house in order." Making quality education, empowered teachers, and a solid curriculum top priorities can actually ease the making of a school-business partnership. And because 94 percent of American business is small business, it falls to the neighborhood high school to reach such local enterprises.

Mann proposes a nine-point program: (1) Estimate potential funds that can be raised, (2) estimate extra work this will require, (3) involve teachers in the partnership process, (4) aim for outcomes to benefit the school, (5) use a diversified approach, (6) go local, (7) stress what *you* have to offer, (8) invest in and manage fund-raising by matching projects to likely business donors, and (9) get help by being included in the district's existing partnerships. Such a program, the author believes, will go far toward retaining students who might otherwise drop out and be a burden rather than an asset to the economy.

6 **Northwest Regional Educational Laboratory.** *Partnerships: Schools and Businesses Collaborate for a Healthy Economy. Ideas for Action in Education and Work*. Portland, OR. September 1985. 11 pages. ED 264 437.

"At a time when both companies and school systems are struggling to do more with less, working together on constructive programs addressing mutual needs offers a new vitality," states this issue of *Ideas for Action*. At Moraine Valley Community College, for example, General Motors, 3M Company, and General Foods collaborated with the college on robotics and customized training programs. This is one of a number of models described in this issue, which also examines some successful working partnerships in detail.

Partnerships take time and commitment; they are not "something one 'squeezes in' to an existing structure." Priorities may need to be restructured for an effective alliance. This is the view of PIPE (Private Initiatives in Public Education), a Seattle-based agency that fosters enriching activities by matching schools with appropriate businesses. Advice is give on how to effect smooth-running partnerships. "The greater the understanding, the greater the possibility for creativity."

Other Northwest programs, such as Portland's Business Youth Exchange and Seattle's Environmental Services Technology Program, are given as models of successful collaboration and curriculum revitalization. A King County (Washington) consortium, TARGET (The Allied Resources Group for Employment Training), pools together human resources from public colleges and county agencies and then pairs these with appropriate business partners. Another group, Portland's Experience Based Career Education (EBCE), explores careers in the community. When they are successful, partnership programs can "create coalitions that renew commitment to public education."

7 **O'Connell, Carol.** *How to Start a School/Business Partnership*. Fastback 226. Bloomington, IN: Phi Delta Kappa, 1985. 34 pages. ED 261 198.

"The partnership movement," says O'Connell, "holds the promise of improving education by extending the boundaries of the school and of building better relationships between schools and businesses." The results can be rewarding—increased communication between businesses and schools, an enriched curriculum, and broad-based corporate support for educational activities. This practical guide is intended to increase the awareness of educators responsible for creating school partnerships and of corporate leaders in exploring how such alliances can contribute to education.

O'Connell groups partnerships into four categories: (1) those involving one business and an individual school or classroom, (2) total district partnerships involving many businesses in many schools, (3) partnerships involving monetary or material contributions to special school projects, and (4) education programs in-

itiated by business and made available to schools. In all cases, corporate employees contribute "time, skill, and knowledge in their particular areas of expertise to enrich the curriculum." For example, Chevron has built a math and science center in a Los Angeles school; company employees designed and taught a unit on prehistoric life for this project.

Other corporate contributions described by the author include services by executive volunteers, mentors, task forces, advisory committee members, providers of facilities and services, and others. Schools can reciprocate, O'Connell says, by offering an exchange of services or facilities—such as "loaning" a principal or teacher to help in corporate education. For example, teachers from St. Louis Park (Minnesota) worked closely with Honeywell representatives on staff development training in one such arrangement.

The stages of planning, organizing, implementing, and evaluating partnership programs are detailed. Implementation includes establishing channels of communication, preparing a timeline, contacting partners, and monitoring activities. Evaluating the program assesses how well objectives have been met and determines which partnerships to continue, which to discontinue, and what new ones to seek. Steps on how to organize an education foundation are given, as well as information sources, an appendix of corporate-sponsored partnerships, and a bibliography.

8 **Pennsylvania Department of Education and others.** *Partnerships in Education. A Handbook*. Pittsburgh, PA. 1984. 13 pages. ED 253 620.

Intended to help communities (in Pennsylvania and elsewhere) without a partnership program to get one started, this handbook also offers insights gained by school districts with existing programs. Definitions and guidelines for partnerships are given from the perspective of the school and the business. Partnership activities should be seen as ongoing rather than one-time efforts. "Mature partnerships seek to emphasize staff, curriculum and student development initiatives, rather than more token involvement such as community donation of prizes for student contests."

A sampling of successful partnership activities includes students placed in work-study positions, company-donated paper put to use in art and computer classes, student theater tickets given to local company employees, and retired employees volunteering to tutor students in math, reading, and science. Steps in starting a program begin with discussing the idea with the district superintendent and then with potential business sponsors. Funding is a key issue, but the major expense is likely to be a full- or part-time program coordinator to oversee and nurture the program.

Suggestions are made on coordinating programs, identifying partners, developing one-to-one relationships, nurturing partnerships, and expanding existing programs. The handbook concludes with a list of agencies where information about upcoming workshops, resources, and funding may be obtained.

9 **Ruffin, Santee C., Jr.** "School-Business Partnerships: Laying the Foundation for Successful Programs." *School Business Affairs*, 50, 2 (February 1984), pp. 14-15, 38-40. EJ 294 894.

The success of a school-business partnership program is directly related to the enthusiasm and staff cooperation given to it, believes Ruffin, urban services director for the National Association of Secondary School Administrators. "Quality, not quantity," he says, "should be a basic policy for every partnership." Administrators need to ask: How is this program enriching the education of the students involved? Successful programs will ultimately yield dividends "in the form of a more literate society, better prepared employees and an America that is proud of its schools."

Factors in a successful partnership program include awareness of school and business expectations, staff support and involvement, as well as clearly defined steps to building the partnership. These steps involve knowing what each "side" wants from the other, identifying firms interested in helping schools, meeting with business representatives, establishing programs and their timelines, naming a project coordinator, and agreeing on evaluation criteria.

Ruffin cites examples of successful urban programs in Chicago, Philadelphia, Indianapolis, Los Angeles, Oakland, and Memphis. In the "Silicon Valley" near Oakland, for example, colleges and local firms are helping teachers and students prepare for high technology jobs vital to the area.

Although most partnerships are geared to the needs of marginal students, he says, "it behooves school administrators to attempt to enrich the learning experiences of all students." Successful partnerships cannot be measured in dollars and cents, but rather in the rewards of providing learning opportunities for the broadest spectrum of students, concludes Ruffin.

10 **Tapper, Donna M.** "Collaborative Efforts of Business and the New York City Public High Schools." Report in *Trends and Forecasts*. New York: Community Council of Greater New York, June 1985. 14 pages. ED 271 526.

The collaborative efforts between New York City's public high schools and the business sector are the focus of this report. With

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over 140 high schools (including vocational and alternative schools), New York City can benefit greatly from effective school-business relationships. These "linkages" bring resources to schools that can then better deal with the area's alarming dropout and subsequent unemployment rate—29 percent for youth ages sixteen to nineteen.

Currently, two ways are used to pair schools and businesses: a business is linked with the school as a whole, or with a specific department or class. Agencies that provide linkages are the Join-A-School Program, Business Education Corporate Pairing Program, and the New York Alliance for the Public Schools. Business involvement assumes many forms and operates on various levels: forming a special relationship with particular schools or departments, providing speakers for specific classes, acting as models or mentors for students, providing a work setting for student internships and/or future employment, and serving on advisory committees for occupational education.

Work experience programs are one example of a formal partnership arrangement; there are twenty-nine such programs in the city, the largest being the Cooperative Education Program of the Board of Education. Among students who had participated in this program, the school dropout rate was less than 2 percent. And over 80 percent of these students continued their education or worked in program jobs. Issues of mutual understanding of objectives and how they will be achieved, expectations of each partner, and supportive attitudes are also discussed. Overall, concludes Tapper, the future promises continued collaborations, and current research findings will help in their effectiveness.

11 **Wynne, George E.** "School-Business Partnerships—A Shortcut to Effectiveness." *NASSP Bulletin*, 70, 491 (September 1986), pp. 94-98. EJ 340 022.

"Timing has never been better to forge school-business partnerships," says educational consultant Wynne. With state-of-the-art training methods, American business has a great deal to offer public education—and it is "available for the asking." Teachers are especially important at this time. Many corporations in fact believe that "teachers are the key to improving the education process and student outcomes." General Electric, for example, supports projects for master math teachers and science projects with grants of up to $1,000.

Public leadership and opinion now favor the establishment of school-business partnerships as viable, productive interchanges of human and material resources. "The private sector," says Wynne, "is anxious to help educators develop more effective schools." But to improve, schools themselves need to initiate efforts in research and development, such as processes to monitor behaviors in basic-skill learning or to evaluate effective teaching methods.

Examples, such as the eminently successful Boston Compact school-business partnership, are given to show current types of programs. Business people not only get "warm and noble" feelings by helping a school, they know that they are sowing the seeds of future business growth.

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Besides processing documents and journal articles, the Clearinghouse prepares bibliographies, literature reviews, monographs, and other interpretive research studies on topics in its educational area.

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